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## DELITZSCH'S "SUMERISCHES GLOSSAR"

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Professor Delitzsch in the present work<sup>1</sup> has collected and presented to the Assyriological world a vast amount of philological material in an orderly and easily comprehensible form. In fact, this is the first "Sumerian glossary" in the proper sense of the word. My *Materials for a Sumerian Lexicon*, although in the form of a word-list, had as its chief aim the demonstration of the linguistic character of Sumerian as opposed to the "allographic theory" of Halévy, whose thesis is now practically moribund. Delitzsch most strikingly begins his work with the exclamation: "Ein Eimer aus einem Meere geschöpft!" thus confessing the necessarily imperfect nature of an early attempt to penetrate the mazes of the Sumerian vocabulary. The author has wisely not burdened his work with masses of needless and confusing statistics, but has sought by a simple and well-arranged list to throw more light on the amazingly complicated intricacies of this difficult system.

He fully recognizes the fact that Sumerian was largely under the influence of Semitic (p. vi), because the invading Semites were compelled to use this, to them, alien idiom as a vehicle for their religious thought. The same point was amply brought out in the Introduction to my *Materials*. Delitzsch also indicates that the basis of the Sumerian vocabularies, as we have them, was laid at a time when both Sumerians and Semites enjoyed a peaceful mutual intercourse; that is, at a time when Sumerian was still a living language in which Semitic priests could receive oral instruction from their Sumerian confrères. The occurrence of so many Semitic loan-words in Sumerian, the majority of which do not appear in the purely Sumerian records, proves that these borrowed expressions belong rather to the spoken than to the written Sumerian. On p. 296, in the Appendix, Delitzsch gives a number of such loan-words, most noticeable among

<sup>1</sup> *Sumerisches Glossar von Friedrich Delitzsch*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1914. Pp. xxvii + 296.

which are *šaman* = *NI* = *š a m n u*, "oil"; *abnu* and *aban* = *TAK* = *a b n u*, "stone"; *šamaš* = *MAN* = *š a m š u*, "sun"; *qadmu* = *QUD* = *q u d m u*; here paronomastically used, etc. (For a full discussion of paronomasia, which played so important a rôle in the formation of the Sumerian vocabulary, see my *Materials*, Introduction, I, iii.)

Delitzsch gives a full list of his citations, pp. xi-xxiv, and on p. vii describes his chief sources, viz., the Sumero-Semitic Aššur-vocabularies, which have not yet been published. Those of them now in Berlin will appear very shortly in the two new parts of the Aššur-publications. Many of these sources were copied by the author personally from squeezes. On p. viii he very severely criticizes the laxity of management which has made it possible for a rapacious horde of dealers to destroy the ancient Babylonian and Assyrian ruin-fields by their unskilled excavations, the results of which are now being offered wholesale to American universities.

Delitzsch's system of transliteration is given, pp. xxv-xxvii, immediately preceding the glossary proper.

His alphabetical order is as follows: *a, i, e, u; b, p; g, k; d, t; l, r; m, n, ġ; z, s, š* (pp. 1-271). That is, the author groups all the vowels together; then the labials, palatals, linguals, nasals, and sibilants. This is a defect in the work, as a beginner might have considerable difficulty in finding a word, especially as the above order is not explained in any way by the author. It would have been much better to have used the ordinary English or even the Semitic arrangement of the alphabet.<sup>1</sup> The main glossary is followed (pp. 272-88) by a list of additional lexicographical material and (pp. 289-95) by the ideograms with their chief Sumerian sound-values. The work closes (p. 296), as mentioned above, with an appendix of the Semitic loan-words in Sumerian.

The extent of this glossary will, of course, prevent my taking up every point of interest to which the author alludes, but I shall endeavor, in the following commentary on Delitzsch's work, to dwell upon some of the most important data presented in his lists.

Very interesting is the connection between the meanings of *a*, "water"; *a*, "water" = *e* = *iku*, "irrigation ditch," pointed out in

<sup>1</sup> As in my *Materials* and in Langdon's *Sumerian Grammar and Chrestomathy*, Paris, 1911, indicated in this article "Langdon." See my review in *AJSL*, XXVIII, 66-77.

*MSL*,<sup>1</sup> is amplified by Delitzsch's comparison with *eš*, "water" = *m û*, and = "tears" = *b a k û*, "weep." The *-š* in *eš*, "water," is probably the same *š* seen in the ideogram *A-ŠI*; lit. "water of the eye," itself a paronomastic association with *eš*. The ideogram *A-ŠI* is usually pronounced *er*, *ir* (*r=š*), but also = *isiš=š i ħ t u m*, *n i s s a t u m*, "lamentation." Note that *uš* = "water" must be classified here. I am inclined to see in *eš*, *is-iš*, *uš*, all = "water" and ending in a sibilant, a modification of the same original stem which appears in *za*, "shining." Note, too, that the ideogram for *za* and *a* was originally the same sign depicting falling water. The *e* = "water" appears also in *e-gâ* (Delitzsch: *a-ge-a*, "schwarzes Wasser"; "black water," hence "flood, high water"). Sem. *i k u*, "ditch," is probably a derivative from this *egâ*. The development of the meanings of *a*, "water, tears, seed, beget, conceive," was clearly indicated (*MSL*, p. ix, and s.v. *a*). Delitzsch asks (p. 4) whether *a* = *a b u*, "father," is from this *a* = "beget" or from *ad* = *a b u*, really = "decider."<sup>2</sup> Probably *a*, "father," is an abbreviated form of *ad*, suggested by *a*, "beget" (see just below on *i=id*). Note here that *i=n â q u*, "lament," is clearly a by-form of *e=a*, "water," and not a derivative from the exclamation *a*, "Oh woe" (p. 17), which in itself seems rather to be a secondary meaning from *a*, *e* in the sense of "tears." Compare here also *i*, "river," a short form of *id*, as just above *a* and *ad*, "father." Delitzsch's *a=k u š š u*, "cold," seems also to be connected with the idea "water."

I am unable to follow the author's connection of *a-za-lu-lu* = *t e n i š ê t u m*, "mankind," with *a=a ħ u l a p*, "how long." He cites *azalulu*=*a ħ u l a p* in *a ħ u l a p-KI* and *a ħ u l a p-niše*, "land" and "people of O how long!" These comparisons bear the stamp of a popular etymology denoting mankind in a theological sense. The *a-za-* in *a-za-lu-lu* is more probably a prefix denoting by reduplication "much, many," as *a-za-lu-lu* means not only "mankind," but also (p. 16) = *n a (m) m a š t i*, "a great quantity of animals." The origin of this *a-za-* is no doubt to be sought in *za=a m ê l u*, "man"; i.e., the *a-* here is the generalizing prefix *a*, *e*, *i*, *u* according to vowel

<sup>1</sup> *MSL* = J. D. Prince, *Materials for a Sumerian Lexicon*, Leipzig, 1908.

<sup>2</sup> Seen in *ad-gar*, "make decision"; thus Delitzsch and *MSL*, 17: *ad-da*, "governor," and *ad-e*, "major-domus." It is perhaps significant that we find Mitanni: *attai*, "father" (Bork, *Mitannisprache*, 126). Note also modern Magyar *atya*, "father" (?).

harmony, seen for example in *a-du*=*alkakatu*, "going" (*MSL*, XVII, n. 4). *A-za-*, therefore, alone denotes "mankind" (*za*) in general + the reduplicated *lu-lu* also = "men" (*lu*=*a m ê l u*). *A-za-lu-lu* is, consequently, a tautological formation. With *a-za* = "humanity" should also be compared the rare *aš*=*a m ê l u*, "man" (p. 17), perhaps a rhotacism, =*ur*? Subsequently, *a-za*, "mankind in general, a multitude," was applied to great numbers of things other than men; hence=*na(m)mašti*, noted above.

In connection with *a-ra-li*, "the underworld" (p. 10), and also = *mîtu*m, "dead," it should be noted that *a-ra-li* also = *urugal* as a synonym; lit. "great city," another conventional expression for the Babylonian Hades. *A-ra-li* is not, as I suggested in *MSL*, a variant in form from *ara-(g)ul*=*uru-gul (gal)*. *Arali* means probably *karmu šuatu*, "that [yonder] desert" = "desert of the future";<sup>1</sup> note that *ara*=*ar (UB)*=*karmu* and *li*=*šuatu*. The ideogram *E-KUR*, "house of the earth"; i.e., "house underground," seems to confirm this rendering. The equivalent *uru-gal* must have been a euphemism.

It seems quite clear that *i*, *ia*, *li*, and *ni*, all meaning "oil, fat," were originally one and the same stem, although this is not hinted at by Delitzsch.

Has *il*, "lift" = *našû*, any connection with Semitic *elû* (עֶלֹ)? Possibly the resemblance is merely accidental. Similarly, *išib* = "libation priest" (p. 29), really indicates "one who speaks" or "calls" = *šib* = *ME* = *qûlu*. I suggested (*MSL*, 194) that this *šib*-value for *ME* may have been taken over into later Sumerian by a paronomastic association with Sem. *ašâpu*, "to conjure." The basic meaning of *še-ib* is *lapâtu*, "turn, overturn" (thus Delitzsch, p. 261). Cf. the infinitive form *šeb-i-da*, "sin.". *Iššebu*, "king" (= *šarru*), must be a loan-form from original *išib*.

The combination *e-gal*; lit. "great house" = "palace, temple," has survived in Semitic in Heb. הֵיכָל and Arabic هَيْكَل.

*Egir*=*arkatum*, "rear, afterwards," looks suspiciously like a metathesis from Semitic *arku*; *arkatu*. On the other hand, *egir*, "prince," is clearly Sumerian = *igi-ir*, "one who goes [*ir*] at the front" (*igi* = "eye, front"; thus also Delitzsch).

<sup>1</sup> Thus also Langdon, p. 203.

Is *el*=*ellu*, "shining, clear," from Semitic *ellu* or is it merely a mnemonic association? A similar query may be asked as to *elum*, "powerful" (*ES*)=*k a b t u*, "heavy, strong"; and also, as to *erin*=*erinnu*, "cedar." *Eme*, "tongue," is clearly a combination of the abstract *e+me*, "speak"=*q û l u*. There is no connection between this word and any other *eme*, as *eme*, "mother"=*ama* (*ômô?*). It is highly probable that *eš*=*n a d û*, "found, establish," is the fuller form of *e*, "house," as *eš* also=*b î t u m*, "house."

Very striking is the connection established by Delitzsch between *u-sa*, "sleep," and *usan*, "evening"=*usa-en* (?). Especially valuable is his statement as to *uš-sa*, "close, next, younger," which in both senses occurs in the Contract Literature; cf. *mu uš-sa*, "next year," a not unusual formula in dates, and not to be confused with Delitzsch's *mu-uš-sa*, "anliegendes Gewand"; cf. also Nesbit, *Drehem Tablets*, XII, 1: 1 *udu gud-e uš-sa*, "one sheep of the younger cattle." *Uš-sa* probably does not mean stall-fed, with Lau<sup>1</sup> and Nesbit. Delitzsch's list of *uš*-meanings (pp. 57 ff.) is very instructive. With *uš*=*e m ê d u*, "press upon, attain, support," is probably connected *MSL*, *uš*=*KU*=*ṭ ê m u*, "message, command," not given by Delitzsch. It should be noted that *sag-uš*, "lift the head," does not belong in this connection, as this *uš* stands for *guš*=*gur*, "raise." The real combination was primitively *sag-guš*. On the other hand, *uš*, "flow," is clearly to be grouped with *uš*, "male, *membrum virile*," connoting flow of semen. Similarly, *uš*, "blood," is from the idea "effusion of blood," and probably *uš*, "death"="bloodshed." *Uš*, "love," also belongs in the "flow"-group.

*Bad* (*ba*), "open," is clearly the same as *ba*, "divide, separate," while *bad*=*BE*, "far," and *bad* also="high" (cf. *bar*, "high"), are probably sense associations from the idea *ba*, "separate." *Bal*, "break through," also belongs here; cf. *MSL*, 50: *bal*=*p u ḥ ḥ û š a z i n n i š t i*, "open a woman," with which must be classified also *bal*, "ax," from *bal*, "to dig, penetrate," and *bal*, "pour out," undoubtedly originally in the sense of sexual intercourse. *Balag*, "lyre, harp" (? *balangu*), must also belong to this *bal*-group. It must have indicated an instrument which is struck. Note that the sign=*n a b â š u*, "strike" (*MSL*, 87). This same sign=*širḥu*, "cry of woe," prob-

<sup>1</sup> Robert Lau, *Old Babylonian Temple Records*, sign-list.

ably from the idea of the harp as an instrument of lamentation. Jensen identifies this word with Syriac *palgâ*, "drum." Compare, however, Meissner,<sup>1</sup> 3112: *bił-gi*=š a r â ħ u, "utter a cry of woe," evidently a paronomastic play on *balag*. *Balag* possibly denoted any instrument which was struck, and later came to mean "harp" or "lyre" specifically. Then, because harps were used for lamentation songs, arose the equation with š a r â ħ u, "utter a woe-cry" (Prince, *AJSL*, XXVIII, 68).

Delitzsch gives three meanings for *banda* (p. 68), viz., (1)=*takširu*, "decision"; (2)="little," and (3)=*tašimtu*, "consideration, insight." The first and third groups are clearly connected in meaning. In fact, they should not have been separated at all, as they seem to belong in the classification indicated in *MSL*, 51-52: *banda*=*TUR-DA*=*ukku**du*, "be strong"; hence=*ikdu*, Br. 4138, and the idea "fix, decide." But in Br. 1725: *ba-an-da* clearly="a sort of vessel" (*DUK-BAR*), probably a pot; cf. *ba-an-diš*=*pot de chambre* (?). This element *ban* appears apparently also in *banšur*=*p a š š u r u*, "vessel," possibly also in *abanniš*=*k a b d u q q u*, "a sort of vessel." It is probable that there were really three *banda*-words, but not as Delitzsch indicates them; viz., (1) "vessel"; (2) "strong, young, little"; (3) from "strong"; "decide, settle."

On *bur*, "hollow," hence "ravine" and "river," cf. *MSL*, p. 7. The river *Burattu* is merely a combination of *bura*, "river" + the Semitic feminine ending *-tu*. When we find the writing *A-rat*, the water-sign *A=a* was pressed into service to denote *the water par excellence*=the Euphrates, read *bura* in Sumerian.

A most interesting word is *galu* (ES. *mulu*), "man." Both *galu* and *lu*="man" and are represented by the *a m ê l u*-sign. Langdon (*Grammar*, 227) considers this *lu* to be an abbreviation of *galu* (*mulu*). I cannot agree with him, as *lu* alone is probably a cognate of *nu*, "man," and also "beget, create"=*KUL*=*z ê r u*, "seed" (note *sag-nu-nu*, "offspring," Delitzsch, 206). This same idea is seen in *na*, "man" (p. 195); also clearly a cognate. The demonstrative elements *na-ne* are no doubt also to be connected here. The *gal*-element (ES. *mul-*) in *galu* is also represented by the *a m ê l u*-sign, as well as by *SAL*, the female sign. This *gal* is the same as that seen

<sup>1</sup> Bruno Meissner, *Seltene assyrische Ideogramme*.

in *gal* = b a š û, "exist, be" = *IK*; hence *galu* (*mulu*) means simply "the existent one" = "man" or "woman." This is not the *gal* of *lu-gal*, "great man" = "king," or of *Eme-gal* (cf. my review of Delitzsch's grammar).

In connection with *gi(e)n* (p. 93) = *DU*, "go," should undoubtedly be grouped *du*, "go" (141), with which should be compared *di*, "go," clearly a cognate also with *ri*, *ra*, verbs of motion. On the interchange of *d-g* and *d-r*, cf. *MSL*, p. x. From the above comparison, it would seem that *dû*(*n*?) was probably the primitive form whence *gên* on the one hand and *ri(n)*-*ra(n)* on the other.

Delitzsch gives three *šeg*-meanings (p. 262): (1) "be willing, agree, favor"; (2) "rain," whence probably *še*, "grain," and (3) "suffering, woe." Of these, the first two should not have been grouped together, for *šeg*, "rain," is quite a different word, possibly connected with *še*, "cold, frost" (p. 261) = "cold rain," and almost certainly with *šeš*, "weep," a probable reduplicated form *še(g)*-*še(g)* of *še*, "rain" (see above, s.v. the value *a*). It is interesting to note that *šega* = a t û d u, Br. 10900, "he-goat," which was the result of a wrong sound association with the totally distinct *siqqa*, "goat." This latter word is even represented by the rain-sign *A-AN* = *šega*, again by false analogy (not indicated by Delitzsch, but in *MSL*, 291).

It will be seen that the possibilities of etymological comparison of the values presented by Delitzsch are almost infinite. The author has done a great service to Assyriology in thus collating a great mass of Sumerian material, but he has made no attempt at comparing the forms etymologically. The first impression made by such a list is that we are forced to conclude that there were tones in spoken Sumerian, a theory which Delitzsch mentions neither here nor in his *Sumerische Grammatic* (see review of the same in *AJSL*, October, 1914). For example, the various meanings attached to the syllables *a* (1-3); *eš* (37); *gal* (76-77); *gur* (109-10); *du* (142-43), etc., suggest this theory as at least one help toward unraveling the mystery of the Sumerian word-tangle. The fact that a vast period of time was covered by the material cited herein also aided in complicating the problem. Thus, a syllable could have been understood at a late period with a different meaning from the primitive one, but still derivative from the primitive idea. Of such developments we know



as yet next to nothing. A most excellent feature of Delitzsch's work is his departure from the signs as true phonetic guides, as he very properly recognizes the syllables alone as the true phonetic norm. I long ago pointed out in *MSL* that the sign-values were paronomastically confused one with the other and that they are, therefore, often misleading if studied only by themselves.

Professor Delitzsch has given the scientific world an illuminating work on the subject of Sumerian lexicography which will undoubtedly be followed by others of a similar and more extensive character, as our Sumerian material is collated and our acquaintance with the language increases.